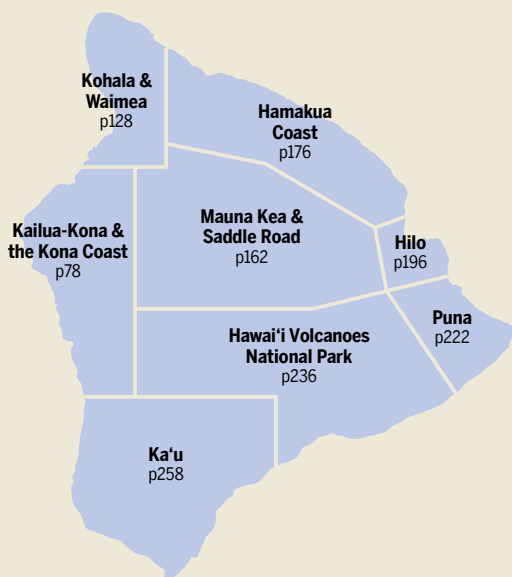




Hawai'i, the Big Island



Adam Karlin, Loren Bell, Luci Yamamoto

PLAN YOUR TRIP

| |
|---|
| Welcome to Hawai'i, the Big Island... 4 |
| Hawai'i, the Big Island Map.....6 |
| Hawai'i, the Big Island's Top 15 ... 8 |
| Need to Know16 |
| What's New18 |
| If You Like.....19 |
| Month by Month.....21 |
| Itineraries 23 |
| Accommodations 30 |
| Getting Around 32 |
| Eat & Drink Like a Local 34 |
| On the Land..... 40 |
| Hiking & Biking..... 43 |
| Driving 48 |
| Diving & Snorkeling.....51 |
| On the Water..... 56 |
| Surfing..... 59 |
| Green Hawai'i 64 |
| Travel with Children... 70 |
| Regions at a Glance....74 |

ON THE ROAD

| | |
|--|---|
| KAILUA-KONA & THE KONA COAST ...78 | KOHALA & WAIMEA 128 |
| Kailua-Kona 82 | South Kohala..... 134 |
| Around Kailua-Kona... 98 | Waikoloa Resort Area ... 134 |
| Keauhou Resort Area... 98 | Waikoloa Village 138 |
| Holualoa..... 102 | Mauna Lani Resort Area..... 139 |
| South Kona Coast ... 104 | Puako 144 |
| Honalo 104 | Mauna Kea Resort Area... 146 |
| Kainaliu 105 | Kawaihae & Around 147 |
| Kealakekua 107 | North Kohala..... 149 |
| Captain Cook 109 | Hawi & Around 149 |
| Kealakekua Bay 111 | Akoni Pule Highway..... 152 |
| Honaunau 113 | Kapa'au 153 |
| Pu'uuhonua o Honaunau National Historical Park 116 | Kohala Mountain Road .. 155 |
| Ho'okena & Around 118 | Pololu Valley 156 |
| Miloli'i 118 | Waimea (Kamuela).... 156 |
| North Kona Coast..... 119 | |
| Honokohau Harbor 119 | MAUNA KEA & SADDLE ROAD 162 |
| Keahole Point 124 | Mauna Kea..... 170 |
| Ka'upulehu 125 | Saddle Road 174 |



HONU (GREEN SEA TURTLE)



WAIPI'O VALLEY P188

Contents

UNDERSTAND

HAMAKUA COAST . . .176

| | |
|------------------------------------|-----|
| Honoka'a | 184 |
| Waipi'o Valley | 188 |
| Laupahoehoe | 191 |
| Hakalau & Around | 192 |
| Honomu | 193 |
| Pepe'ekeo to Papaikou | 194 |

HILO 196

PUNA 222

| | |
|-------------------------|-----|
| Kea'au | 226 |
| Pahoa | 227 |
| Red Road | 230 |
| Kalapana Area | 231 |
| Kapoho Area | 234 |

HAWAI'I VOLCANOES NATIONAL PARK . . 236

| | |
|--|-----|
| Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park | 244 |
| Volcano | 255 |

KA'U 258

| | |
|----------------------------------|-----|
| Pahala | 264 |
| Punalu'u | 264 |
| Na'alehu | 265 |
| South Point (Ka Lae) | 267 |
| Ocean View & Around | 268 |
| Kahuku Unit | 270 |

| | |
|--|-----|
| Hawai'i, the Big Island Today | 272 |
| History | 274 |
| People of the Big Island | 281 |
| Hawaiian Arts & Crafts | 285 |
| Lei | 291 |
| Landscapes & Wildlife | 294 |

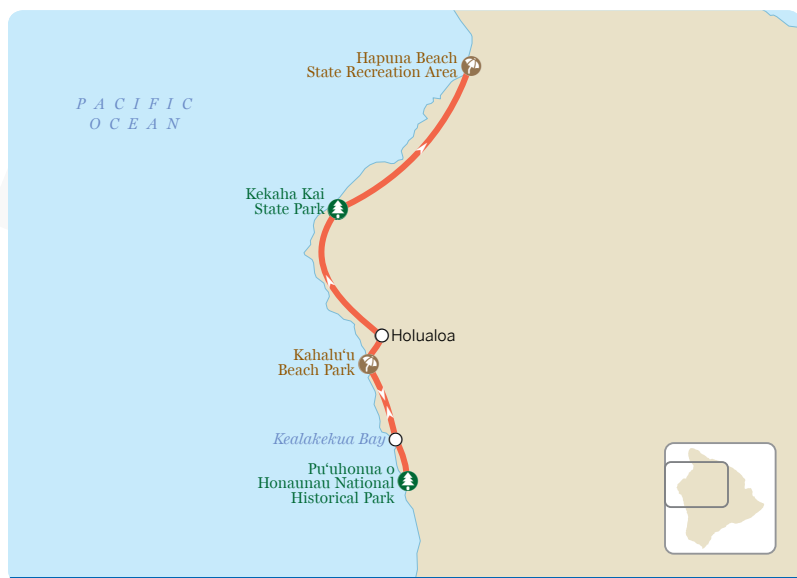
SURVIVAL GUIDE

| | |
|--------------------------|-----|
| Directory A–Z | 300 |
| Transportation | 305 |
| Index | 311 |
| Map Legend | 319 |

SPECIAL FEATURES

| | |
|-------------------------------|----|
| Hiking & Biking | 43 |
| Driving | 48 |
| Diving & Snorkeling | 51 |
| Surfing | 59 |
| Green Hawai'i | 64 |

Itineraries



4 DAYS Gold Coast

If your idea of Hawai'i is sun, sand and surf, focus on the famous Gold Coast. Here you'll find a variety of beaches, from convivial drive-up favorites to remote gems accessible only by 4WD. Between beach trips, explore ancient Hawaiian sites and the world-renowned Kona Coffee Belt.

After landing in Kailua-Kona, beat jet lag at easy-access **Kahalu'u Beach Park**, where you might be rewarded with a sighting of *honu* (Hawaiian green sea turtles). Later, explore **Pu'uuhonua O Honaunau National Historical Park**, an ancient 'Place of Refuge,' and gaze at your first island sunset. The next day, book a cruise or a kayaking permit to snorkel in **Kealakekua Bay**, a veritable aquarium of fascinating marine life. Cool off in upcountry **Holualoa**, a former coffee village now thriving as an arts community.

If you're then hankering for a more off-road experience, hire a 4WD (and bring lots of sunscreen) to reach **Kekaha Kai State Park**, a string of once-remote beaches. Alternatively, bask in the rays at **Hapuna Beach State Recreation Area** or treat yourself to a round of golf or luxury spa treatment at one of South Kohala's resorts.



10
DAYS

Kona to Hilo Loop

Can't decide between West and East Hawai'i? Split your time on either side, in the gloriously verdant Hamakua Coast and the barren mountainous landscape of Saddle Road.

Start in **Kailua-Kona**, where the sunshine will switch your body clock to local time. Spend a day or two enjoying ocean sports, such as bodyboarding at **Magic Sands Beach**, snorkeling at **Kahalu'u Beach**, diving or deep-sea fishing. Between dips, ground yourself in island history at Hulihe'e Palace, where Hawaiian royalty vacationed.

Meander up the South Kohala Coast, stopping for a walk to the **Puako Petroglyph Preserve** and to **Hapuna Beach State Recreation Area** for an archetypal beach day.

Next, enjoy the island's bucolic side in **Waimea**, a *paniolo* (Hawaiian cowboy) town, and **Hawi**, surrounded by rolling hills. Eating is excellent in these towns, where you'll find acclaimed Hawaii Regional Cuisine and innovative sushi. Make your way into **Pololu Valley**, where each little switchback presents another stupendous view.

Now it's time to head east. First stop: **Honoka'a**, a historic town now known for niche crops, a strong local community and irresistible *malasadas* (Portuguese doughnuts) at Tex Drive-In. Work off those doughnuts by walking down the steep road into **Waipi'o Valley**. Along the Hamakua Coast, stop at the **Laupahoehoe Train Museum**, a mini gallery highlighting the magnificent railroads that once chugged over the gigantic gulches.

Settle now in **Hilo**, the untouristy capital seat, with a charming historic downtown. Splash with the tots at **Onekahakaha Beach Park** or look for *honu* (Hawaiian green sea turtles) at **Richardson's Ocean Park**. From Hilo, take a day trip or two to **Puna**, cruising through sultry tropical jungles and, if your timing's right, trekking to see molten lava at night. Don't miss **Uncle Robert's Wednesday Night Market** for a truly local experience.

End your visit with the island's prize: **Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park**, a veritable jackpot for hikers and nature lovers. Check with the rangers at the visitor center first. Don't miss the impressive collection at Volcano Art Center and the farmers market on Sunday. Finally return to Kona via **Saddle Road**, which snakes its way between Mauna Kea and Mauna Loa.



2
WEEKS

Circle Island Tour

To get your arms around Hawai'i, you need at least two weeks. You need enough time not only for driving, but also for absorbing the sheer diversity of terrain, climate and culture.

Stay a couple of nights in **South Kona**, where the easygoing village pace and lush scenery make for a relaxing tonic. Reserve a kayak permit to explore the breathtaking marine life in **Kealakekua Bay**. For an extraordinarily retro experience, feast on pork chops or fried *'opelu* (mackerel scad) at **Manago Restaurant**.

Go south into Ka'u, stopping to explore the stunning **Kula Kai Caverns** with expert guides. Stop at **Ka Lae**, the southernmost point in the USA, and, if undeterred by whipping winds and rugged terrain, trek to **Green Sand Beach**, where the 'reward' is not the actual beach (which is not swimmable), but the striking scene (and spirit of adventure).

Enter new territory as you approach **Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park**. Avid hikers should find accommodations in Volcano village and start all-day hikes bright and early. To see molten lava, go to **Puna**, where you most likely have to hoof it over punishing terrain or sail across choppy waters to a viewing site. Recover by kicking back amid lush tree canopies and tide pools, enjoying the anything-goes attitude.

Continue circling the island to **Hilo**, a convenient home base with a multitude of restaurants, shops and things to do. Cobble together a picnic lunch and find a shady spot at Lili'uokalani Park, and visit the Bengal tigers at the well-tended Pana'ewa Rainforest Zoo. Ascend **Mauna Kea** to witness an unforgettable sunset and then stargaze.

After a few days in Hilo, head west along the **Hamakua Coast**, arguably the most scenic route along the highway. Take the short, steep hike into **Waipi'o Valley**. For an interesting *paniolo* (cowboy) plantation town, stay in **Honoka'a**, where nearby niche farms are thriving.

Finally head south along the Kohala Coast, stopping for a dip at picturesque **Mau'umae Beach**. Pay homage to Kamehameha I at the ruins of his **Pu'ukohola Heiau**. Splurge on a couple of nights at the **Four Seasons Resort Hualalalai**. For variety, check out **Kailua-Kona's** burgeoning restaurant scene for dinner.

5
DAYS

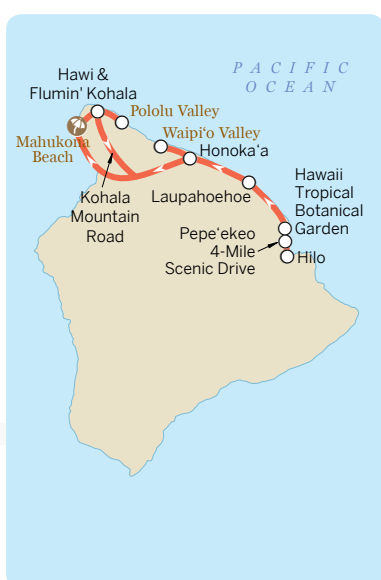
Volcano Watching

Only on Hawai'i can you fully appreciate the power of Pele, goddess of fire and volcanoes. Here, drive past lava deserts, hike across huge craters and glimpse red-hot molten lava, if you're lucky. Stay in Hilo, Puna or Volcano and reserve one day for Mauna Kea.

To explore Hawai'i's volcanoes, **Hilo**, the island capital, is an ideal starting point. Go to 'Imiloa Astronomy Center to ground yourself in volcanology, astronomy and ancient voyaging. Picnic at Lili'uokalani Park, Japanese gardens with a view of Mauna Kea.

Next head to **Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park** and make a beeline for the museum and kid-favorite lava tube. Hiking in the national park is a must; choose from all-day treks to short nature walks.

Spend at least a day in **Puna**, the epicenter of lava activity and alternative lifestyles (welcome hippies!). Drive the jungly back roads, and you'll find lava attractions, from the **Kapoho Tide Pools** to the island's newest black sand at **New Kaimu Beach**. Lava sighting typically requires an arduous hike or choppy boat tour. Finally make your way to **Mauna Kea's Summit Area**, either by 4WD, by tour or, for the extremely fit and intrepid, by foot.

4
DAYS

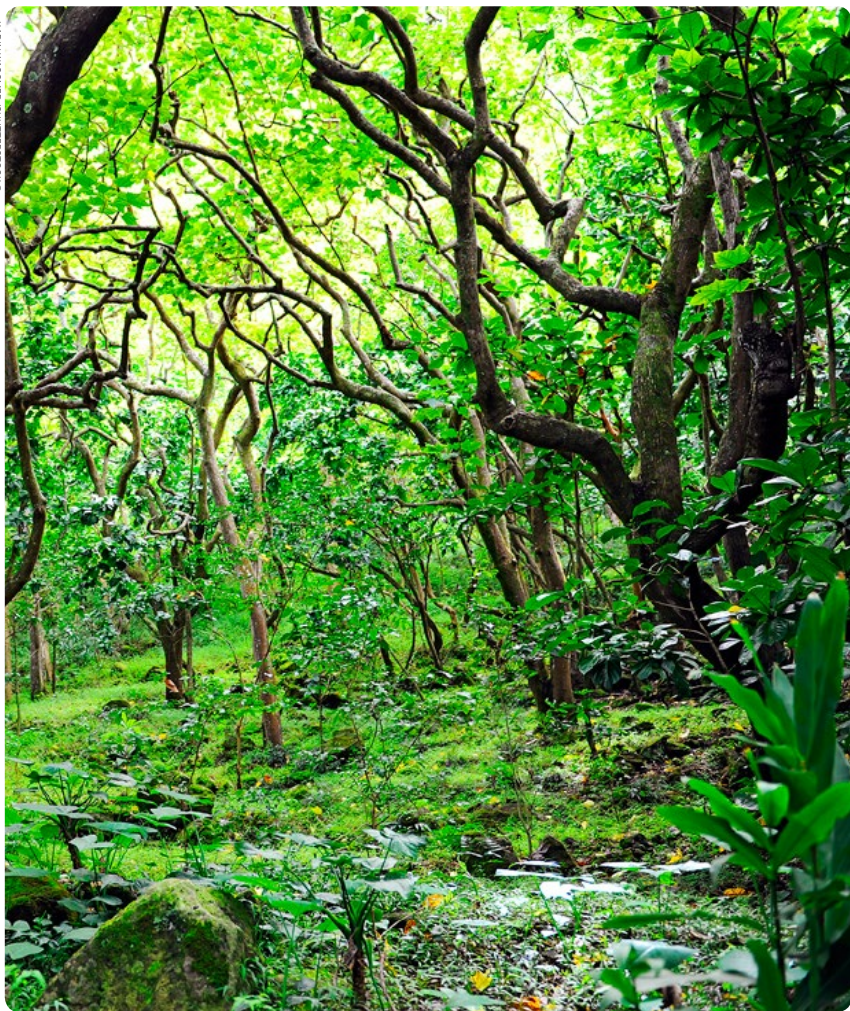
Small Town Retreat

To escape high-rises, traffic, big-box stores and crowds, target the Hamakua Coast and North Kohala. Here former plantation towns are remarkably unchanged, and you'll revel in silence and small-town pace.

From **Hilo** cross the 'Singing Bridge' and suddenly you're in the country. Veer onto the **Pepe'ekoe 4-mile Scenic Drive** for a visual extravaganza of tropical flora, which you can see close-up at **Hawaii Tropical Botanical Garden**. In **Laupahoehoe**, wind your way down to the windswept coast.

Honoka'a is tiny, but it's a rustic charmer with indie eats and sleeps. Spend one day exploring **Waipi'o Valley**, either walking the steep path to the beach or joining a guided tour into the valley. Along the entire coast, try touring a boutique farm: mushrooms, vanilla, tea or coffee.

Next drive up the windswept North Kohala coast, stopping to snorkel at **Mahukona Beach**, which has zero beach appeal but boasts colorful marine life. Stay in **Hawi**, where you'll find standout dining. On your last day, hike down into **Pololu Valley** and kayak with **Flumin' Kohala** in historic irrigation ditches. Drive down **Kohala Mountain Road** for a final visual treat.



KARIN WASSNER/SHUTTERSTOCK ©

Top: Waipi'o Valley
(p188)
Bottom: Hapuna Beach
(p144)

VISUALS UNLIMITED, INC./RECK SMITH/GETTY IMAGES ©



Hawai'i, the Big Island: Off the Beaten Track

THE KOHALA INSTITUTE

Dive into the early colonial history of the Big Island, all while trekking along jungle paths that lie just off of the bohemian enclaves of North Kohala. (p155)

WAIMEA BACK ROADS

A spiderweb of thin roads forms a fascinating network in the misty upcountry that surrounds Waimea. Go down little-known paths, and find a gorgeous new angle on Hawai'i's cattle country. (p160)

KIHOLO BAY

Discover this enormous bay where a plethora of landscapes, from red desert to black-sand beach to rocky coastline, awaits. Don't forget to say hi to the sunning sea turtles while you're here. (p123)



AHUALOA PASTORAL DETOUR

Experience a gentle, rural side of the Hamakua Coast with this bucolic little road trip, which winds through some of the most attractive agricultural scenery on the east side of the Big Island. (p185)

KALOPA STATE RECREATION AREA

Two overland trail systems form a web of exploration opportunities in this lovely slice of preserved eucalyptus groves, ferns, and deep gulches. An excellent outdoor excursion for families and small groups. (p192)

MANA ROAD

Highland flora and copses of fir trees mark this mountainous excursion, which takes in an alpine vistas that are wholly unexpected in tropical Hawaii. (p172)

GOVERNMENT BEACH ROAD

Go (more) off the grid in counter-culture Puna. Little country roads and jungle paths wind around mango groves and swathes of dramatic Pacific coastline. (p235)




















HAWAII VOLCANOES NATIONAL PARK

Witness the primal engine of creation churning out actual lava, which bubbles in dramatic flows across the Mordor-esque slatescape of Volcanoes National Park. When else will you get a chance to see creation in action? (p253)














Map Legend

Sights

-  Beach
-  Bird Sanctuary
-  Buddhist
-  Castle/Palace
-  Christian
-  Confucian
-  Hindu
-  Islamic
-  Jain
-  Jewish
-  Monument
-  Museum/Gallery/Historic Building
-  Ruin
-  Shinto
-  Sikh
-  Taoist
-  Winery/Vineyard
-  Zoo/Wildlife Sanctuary
-  Other Sight

Activities, Courses & Tours

-  Bodysurfing
-  Diving
-  Canoeing/Kayaking
-  Course/Tour
-  Sento Hot Baths/Onsen
-  Skiing
-  Snorkeling
-  Surfing
-  Swimming/Pool
-  Walking
-  Windsurfing
-  Other Activity

Sleeping

-  Sleeping
-  Camping

Eating

-  Eating

Drinking & Nightlife

-  Drinking & Nightlife
-  Cafe











Entertainment

-  Entertainment












Shopping

-  Shopping





Information

-  Bank
-  Embassy/Consulate
-  Hospital/Medical
-  Internet
-  Police
-  Post Office
-  Telephone
-  Toilet
-  Tourist Information
-  Other Information



















Geographic

-  Beach
-  Gate
-  Hut/Shelter
-  Lighthouse
-  Lookout
-  Mountain/Volcano
-  Oasis
-  Park
-  Pass
-  Picnic Area
-  Waterfall
















Population

-  Capital (National)
-  Capital (State/Province)
-  City/Large Town
-  Town/Village





Transport

-  Airport
-  BART station
-  Border crossing
-  Boston T station
-  Bus
-  Cable car/Funicular
-  Cycling
-  Ferry
-  Metro/Muni station
-  Monorail
-  Parking
-  Petrol station
-  Subway/SkyTrain station
-  Taxi
-  Train station/Railway
-  Tram
-  Underground station
-  Other Transport







Routes

-  Tollway
-  Freeway
-  Primary
-  Secondary
-  Tertiary
-  Lane
-  Unsealed road
-  Road under construction
-  Plaza/Mall
-  Steps
-  Tunnel
-  Pedestrian overpass
-  Walking Tour
-  Walking Tour detour
-  Path/Walking Trail



Boundaries

-  International
-  State/Province
-  Disputed
-  Regional/Suburb
-  Marine Park
-  Cliff
-  Wall

Hydrography

-  River, Creek
-  Intermittent River
-  Canal
-  Water
-  Dry/Salt/Intermittent Lake
-  Reef

Areas

-  Airport/Runway
-  Beach/Desert
-  Cemetery (Christian)
-  Cemetery (Other)
-  Glacier
-  Mudflat
-  Park/Forest
-  Sight (Building)
-  Sportsground
-  Swamp/Mangrove

Note: Not all symbols displayed above appear on the maps in this book



OUR STORY

A beat-up old car, a few dollars in the pocket and a sense of adventure. In 1972 that's all Tony and Maureen Wheeler needed for the trip of a lifetime – across Europe and Asia overland to Australia. It took several months, and at the end – broke but inspired – they sat at their kitchen table writing and stapling together their first travel guide, *Across Asia on the Cheap*. Within a week they'd sold 1500 copies. Lonely Planet was born.

Today, Lonely Planet has offices in Franklin, London, Melbourne, Oakland, Dublin, Beijing and Delhi, with more than 600 staff and writers. We share Tony's belief that 'a great guidebook should do three things: inform, educate and amuse'.

OUR WRITERS



Adam Karlin

Kailua-Kona & the Kona Coast, Kohala & Waimea Adam is a Lonely Planet author based out of wherever he is. Born in Washington DC and raised in the rural Maryland tidewater, he has been exploring the world and writing about it since he was 17. It's a blessedly interesting way to live one's life. Also, it's good fun.



Loren Bell

Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park, Ka'u, Mauna Kea & Saddle Road, Puna When Loren first backpacked through Europe, he was in the backpack. That memorable experience corrupted his 6-month-old brain, ensuring he would never be happy sitting still. His penchant for peregrination has taken him from training dogsled teams in the Tetons to chasing gibbons in the jungles of Borneo – with only brief pauses for silly 'responsible' things like earning degrees. When he's not

demystifying destinations for Lonely Planet, Loren writes about science and conservation news. He base-camps in the Rocky Mountains where he probably spends too much time on his mountain bike and skis.



Luci Yamamoto

Hamakua Coast, Hilo A fourth-generation native of Hawai'i, Luci is unfazed by rain, pidgin and long Hawaiian words. When she left law to be a writer, she heard the old adage: write what you know. For Lonely Planet she thus targeted the Hawaiian Islands. To her surprise, her *kama'aina* background was only a launchpad – and she discovered extraordinary new people and places on her home island. Currently a writer, editor, Iyengar yoga teacher, and blogger (www.yogaspy.com) in Vancouver, she regularly returns to Hawai'i and recharges her local 'cred.' Even more than papayas and *poke*, she loves the Big Island's aloha spirit.

Published by Lonely Planet Global Limited

CRN 554153

4th edition – Sep 2017

ISBN 978 1 78657 705 4

© Lonely Planet 2017 Photographs © as indicated 2017

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Printed in China

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be copied, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form by any means, electronic, mechanical, recording or otherwise, except brief extracts for the purpose of review, and no part of this publication may be sold or hired, without the written permission of the publisher. Lonely Planet and the Lonely Planet logo are trademarks of Lonely Planet and are registered in the US Patent and Trademark Office and in other countries. Lonely Planet does not allow its name or logo to be appropriated by commercial establishments, such as retailers, restaurants or hotels. Please let us know of any misuses: lonelyplanet.com/ip.

Although the authors and Lonely Planet have taken all reasonable care in preparing this book, we make no warranty about the accuracy or completeness of its content and, to the maximum extent permitted, disclaim all liability arising from its use.

© Lonely Planet Publications Pty Ltd. To make it easier for you to use, access to this chapter is not digitally restricted. In return, we think it's fair to ask you to use it for personal, non-commercial purposes only. In other words, please don't upload this chapter to a peer-to-peer site, mass email it to everyone you know, or resell it. See the terms and conditions on our site for a longer way of saying the above - 'Do the right thing with our content.'